

gospel in life

Generosity: Generosity & Relationships

³ So watch yourselves.

"If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. ⁴ Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying 'I repent,' you must forgive them."

⁵ The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

⁶ He replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you.

⁷ "Suppose one of you has a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Will he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, 'Come along now and sit down to eat'? ⁸ Won't he rather say, 'Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink'? ⁹ Will he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? ¹⁰ So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.'"

Luke 17:3-10 (NIV)

To be radically generous means you will be pervasively generous in every area of your life.

Currencies: (Currency is a medium for exchanging value. Money, Emotional space, Time, Relationships – Relational Generosity)

Signs: Disdain, Critical comments, not giving benefit of the doubt

A More Specific Form

(That should characterize all Christians)

Forgiveness

The Enormity of the Challenge (*It's worse than you think!*)

"If a person would wrong you as completely and as fully as any person could wrong another human being, you must forgive him."

The Enormity of the Danger

"So watch yourselves..."

¹⁵ See to it that no root of bitterness springs up and causes trouble and by it many have been defiled. Hebrews 12:15

If you hold onto anger it will defile you.

- Wrath – twisted and distorted by anger
- Wreath – branches twisted into a shape
- Writhe - twist
- Wrathe – ghost who had been wronged and is doomed to relive what has been done to them. Their future is completely controlled by the past.

How do we do it? What is the practice of forgiveness?

Forgiveness is granted before it is felt.

How to avoid becoming a Wrathe

- Refuse to caricature the wrongdoer... identify with them
 - "Forgiveness flounders when I exclude the person from the community of humans and I exclude myself from the community of sinners."
- Inwardly surrender your right to repayment and pay it yourself.
 - "Wood, nails and pain are the currency of forgiveness."
- Will the good of the wrong-doer
 - Rebuke with the intent to restore
 - Can only happen when you forgive before you rebuke.
 - "The line between moral outrage for the sake of God and of truth and the immoral outrage because I'm on the losing side is painfully thin. On the issue I may be right, but in my heart I may be terribly wrong because I am less motivated by the glory of God and justice and I am actually out for personal vindication. Saving face, putting a person in their place is revenge. To quote passages on justice to justify the nurtured bitterness of personal injury is for the Christian inexcusable." Don Carson

Don't be a servant acting like a king.

Where do you get the power to do this?

The "mustard seed" question.

"[Jesus] doesn't mean faith in general, he means faith in him. If you had a smidgen of an understanding of what he has done for you; if you had the slightest understanding of what I've done for you; if you had the slightest understanding that you are a sinner saved by grace; if in your self-righteousness you think that you are saving yourself and that God owes you. If you instead had moved over under the gospel at all, you'll be able to forgive. If you have any idea what I've done, you'll be able to forgive.

You say, what did he do. I'll tell you what he did. The only way to get out of the incongruity of the servants acting like kings is to see the beauty of the king who became a servant. You'll never be longsuffering until you see him going to the cross to suffer for you. You'll never be able to forgive people for their little, tiny debts toward you until you see him dying on the cross to pay your great debt. You'll never stop being a judge until you see the real judge of all the universe getting out of the judgment seat and coming down and going to court and being condemned and being tortured and killed for you. Here's the judge who didn't stay in his seat, but became judged for you. How in the world can you take a judgment seat on anybody else. That will change you.